The University of Puget Sound campus community received an email from Vice President of Institutional Equity and Diversity, Lorna Hernandez Jarvis, on Jun. 31 about an incident of antisemitism and white supremacist vandalism on campus. The vandalism was first noticed by a University staff member in an electrical transformer box near Lower Baker Field, and was quickly cleaned up by Facilities Services. The email also stated that the University filed a report with the Tacoma Police Department.

Tite IX Coordinator Sandra Braedt, alongside Security Services, conducted an investigation into this incident and the numerous others in recent history. In an email conversation, Braedt told The Trail that when a report comes in, Security goes to the reported location immediately to photograph the vandalism and have it removed. She encourages the campus community to “report anything they see as soon as they see it,” ensuring dually that it is removed and to improve Security’s timeline of when the hate speech activity occurred.

I sat down with three executive members of the Jewish Student Union who shared their thoughts on the recent antisemitic vandalism.

This interview follows months of white power/supremacist sticker reports surrounding campus and proceeds to the most recent Mussolini sticker. The racist hate symbols left outside Puget Sound’s production of Indecent: The Story of a little Jewish play.

The recent antisemitic vandalism incident is not a localized problem, but something that has continued recurring frequently for years. How does this affect the feeling of belonging for Jewish students on campus?

Mimi: “I mean, maybe, kind of obviously it doesn’t make me feel like I belong. I have been here for four years on campus and every single semester there has been at least one instance where we’ve gotten an email like this. Usually more. I have been on exec for two years and last year we spent more time responding to antisemitic vandalism than we did planning cool community events. I’ve had many moments of calling my mom crying, like I don’t belong in this place and people don’t want me here. There is the percent, or less than one percent, of people who are really horrible. But then there’s the 95% of people who don’t read their emails, who don’t show up to the events we put on and don’t engage in this. I think that’s what’s so frustrating to me, that people don’t care. That’s what makes me feel like I don’t belong, the people that don’t care.

There’s antisemitism everywhere but then there are people who could be doing things, they aren’t mean and bigots, but they just don’t care. To me, that’s how this affects my sense of belonging. Seeing something like this happens and nobody’s talking about it except for me and my friends who are Jewish.”

Hannah: “We received an email the day before the campus-wide email went out. It was protocol, you’re expected to read the emails. Especially coming off of the hostage event in Houston and the rise of antisemitism in general, seeing that it is happening on campus and its last run of the mill news, and the only person I talked about with are Jewish people. Those are the people who don’t need to be talking about it, we’re not the ones who need to be the ones who don’t care and we’re the only ones reeling with that. It totally relates in a lot of ways.”

Elaina: “I think that this is a two-prong issue. We have to decide where we’re going to put our energy. Is it dealing with antisemitism? I think that the OIED office and Tolu and Vivie are awesome, and their team and the student support - Naomi and Maya help us a lot. But at the end of the day, I’m not Jewish. Most colleges have a Hillel or a Chabad…”

Mimi: “Or a Jewish Life Coordinator or something like that.”

Elaina: “I think that there are pockets of goodness on this campus, but that doesn’t negate the fact that there’s still a lack of help. Every club on this campus that has experienced hate or discrimination has buled lists of things that would make them feel more safe or comfortable. There’s things that our club has brought that have not been listened to, there are clear steps that would make us feel more safe. Safety and justice is just making sure there’s no stickers. If you look at most universities in the United States there is some paid staff member who helps Jewish students. There is not a single person on this campus to help Jewish students. We have Dave who is amazing, but he’s a chaplain. At the end of the day, he’s not Jewish. Most colleges have a Hillel or a Chabad…”

Mimi: “Or a Jewish Life Coordinator or something like that.”

Hannah: “Even an active advisor who’s really helping to move and pivot the club.”

Elaina: “I think that the OIED office and Tolou and Vivie are awesome, and their team and the student support - Naomi and Maya help us a lot. But at the end of the day when we have questions we don’t have someone to go to. I think that’s really difficult for a lot of students. We don’t have a vast knowledge. When we have a student to come to campus who needs a Kosher meal we’re the ones who are contacted. There’s no one on campus to contact except for us. That’s a really interesting place that we play because that’s a super-port that The University should guarantee, and has promised to guarantee. And they do provide Kosher meals but they have to come through us first. So when we have a student who needs Kosher meal, or they want to go to services or go to a Jewish summer camp or anything we’re the point people. They will contact us, but there should be someone that is paid to do that.”

Mimi: “We’re just here to create a space for people to fully be themselves but we’re not able to fully do that because we don’t have the expertise…”

This is a club, but it really feels more like a job. We can’t just show up at meetings and say ‘this is what we’re doing today,’ there’s also this other work. That’s where we need the support that doesn’t exist.”

Elaina: “Being a part of a marginalized group on campus we understand that we’re not alone in this. I think that the MBU demands are a buled list of things that benefit all marginalized students including us. Safety looks like a lot of things, and safety for all marginalized students on this campus. It’s too easy for us, as MBU, to experience antisemitism, chances are another club is experiencing hate too and it’s our job to make sure that no one has to deal with that.”

Mimi: “And a lot of the vandalism that four generations of white supremacists did on campus. It will be antisemitism, but also a lot of it just white supremacist stickers or things like that.”

Hannah: “Do we as JSU have specific things that we’ve expressed to the administration? Yes. I think that every club has specific things that they’ve expressed as well. But at the end of the day that JSU demands encompass most of those needs.”

What can non-Jewish UPS students do to support Jewish peers?

Mimi: “Pay attention to the emails that get sent out. Read them and show up to events. Engage with this. My biggest thing is people showing up and learning. We put on educational events. Last year we put on a panel on the history of antisemitism and white supremacy. We put on about 20 events, but people should show up but the people who showed up are the people who always show up. So show up to things! Come to the events we put on, like Passover. Passover is going to be an open campus event, a way for people to have fun and learn and experience the joy of Judaism and not just antisemitism. Make an effort to go to things like that. Know that we’re here to be there when we’re doing things on campus. Make an effort to read the emails that are sent out and see if there are any events that are happening. We want people to read our emails we include articles about antisemitism that people could read, so read those articles. We are taking the time to do this research and the events so that people will come, and when people don’t come it’s really frustrating. That’s my biggest thing, showing up and engaging…”

Another thing about understanding and engaging, showing up to other identity based clubs as well as being able to understand the ways that things intersect. We are part of MBU. MBU shows up to the open MBU events and put your support behind the things that marginalized students on campus are doing in general and it will help everyone.”

Hannah: “Maybe on a smaller scale, acknowledgement is huge. People acknowledging what’s going on and not pretending it didn’t happen. I think that a professor acknowledged that this happened and that people are hurt that would be huge. Or if your friend said to you, ‘Hey I saw the email the other day about the stickers, should we find out more?’ Or if your media and infographics are not as impactful as individual conversations and communications that you have with your Jewish friends.”

All three of the JSU executive team members expressed gratitude for the work of University Chaplain Dave Wright for their efforts to fight white supremacy. The MBU might want it known that they are always available as a resource for students who are affected by hate, harassment or discrimination. Write to the reporter. Their office is in Wheelock 219, and their email is dwright@pugetsound.edu.

To file an official report of discrimination or harassment, use the following link:
https://www.pugetsound.edu/file-discrimination-or-harassment-report
Tacoma's hospital policies through COVID peaks and valleys

By Hannah Lee

Tacoma General Hospital

A map sign making a statement about eviction

Photo Credit: Flickr

Pierce County households face $93 million in late rent bills as moratoriums lift

Washington State lifted its indoor mask mandate on March 12th in response to dwindling COVID case numbers and hospitalizations. The Trail spoke with Keren Rivkin, second-year and volunteer at the Multicare Tacoma General Hospital Emergency Department, to see how hospitals are responding to the rise and decline of the Omicron variant.

According to Rivkin, the hospital followed government guidelines when making their COVID policies. The hospital used recommendations from the CDC, and WHO for covid regulations. Patients with serious infections were isolated and cared for by the appropriate staff. Visitors are screened for symptoms and expected to wear a protective mask.” Rivkin said. She also mentioned that visitors for positive or pending COVID-19 patients are not allowed.

The hospital makes exceptions for patients who are minors or receiving end of life care. Medical personnel are required to be fully vaccinated and complete a daily COVID-19 screening.

Rivkin explained that the hospital didn’t change its policies after the decline of the Delta variant, before Omicron. “The hospital followed the infection prevention protocol and enforced the COVID regulations before Omicron and continues to do the same after the surge of Omicron.” Rivkin said. She also believes the hospital does its best to protect its visitors. Rivkin commented that while increased COVID patients have not impacted non-COVID care in terms of treatment, there are increased wait times for the emergency room.

When asked if COVID affected Rivkin’s experience volunteering at the hospital Rivkin explained, “I can’t go into the rooms with positive COVID patients or those who have pending covid tests.” She went on, “I am only allowed to enter certain rooms whereas staff can enter patient rooms.” Rivkin also noted the changes to the COVID policy made in response to the Omicron variant. “After the surge of Omicron, all health care professionals and volunteers were required to complete respiratory training and wear an N95 mask due to the high transmissiion. We also got more hallway beds to be able to handle more patients.” Rivkin said.

According to Rivkin, the hospital transformed their waiting room into a space for more beds with privacy curtains, and moved their waiting area outside of necessity during Omicron peaks. Respiratory training included individualized fitting for “a mask with a built in respirator which filter out any nearby particles.” Rivkin mentioned that when she was fitted for one, they sprayed a bitter spray to make sure that she couldn’t smell or taste it to ensure the respirator and mask fit properly.

Rivkin noted that the Omicron variant significantly increased patient volume. “After omicron, there was an increase in the number of patients with Covid, however there were still more people admitted to the emergency room without covid than with covid.” Rivkin said. She also mentioned how some people are there because they have serious diseases that put them at risk for developing or contracting COVID. Rivkin elaborated that many patients aren’t there because of COVID complications specifically, noting “It might have been worse before the vaccines, but I wasn’t there.”

Rivkin mentioned that following the Omicron surge, the hospital is slowly getting back normal and still trying to minimize patients on hallway beds and having less patients in general” Rivkin said. At the time of publication the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, in Pierce County, reports 97 new cases and 3 new hospitalizations per 100,000 people.

Pierce County households face $93 million in late rent bills as moratoriums lift

By Emma Loenicker

Place home. When her landlords decided to sell her home a year ago, they only required 20 days’ notice. She told me that “scrambling for housing with only 20 days’ notice right before school starts is a special sort of hell.” She explained that looking to rent after being evicted is “like a life sentence that forces you to rent substandard housing.”

Currently, a volunteer for Tacoma Tenants Organizing Committee, Dorn works to “provide advice and resources, and support tenant efforts to organize including the formation of tenant unions.” Pierce County renters and politicians are considered to be the Wide out of any rent friendly and utility assistance programs, but customers must apply for them while they last. When Mary Anne Dillon, the executive director for the YWCA in Snohomish County spoke with King5 News, she said that the YWCA has long been a resource for rental assistance, but that the Pandemic exacerbated disparities between wages and rent costs in Washington. Dillon clarified that the YWCA continues helping as much as resources allow and that attempts have been made to help local landlords in pursuit of financial well-being for all parties involved.

By Keri Boggess

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Tacoma's hospital policies through COVID peaks and valleys by Hannah Lee

Tacoma has seen a drop in COVID patients with the rise of the Omicron variant. According to Rivkin, the hospital has seen a decrease in COVID patients in the emergency room.

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Tacoma General Hospital

Photo Credit: Audley Davis / The Trail

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they can quickly start in school, on an education or in a job", Rasmus Stoklund, the foreign affairs spokesperson for Denmark’s ruling Social Democratic Party, said. However, the quick and welcoming response to Ukrainian refugees has highlighted the discrepancy in the treatment of refugees from other conflicts. Despite their response to Ukrainian refugees, the Danish government is urging Syrian refugees from Damascus and surrounding areas to return to their country. The Damascus area is currently in the midst of a violent civil war, one that took the lives of over 3,700 people in 2021 alone, according to National Public Radio. Michala Clante Bendixen, the head of Refugees Welcome Denmark, an organization that aims at creating an easier asylum system, suggested that the Danish government puts a higher value on refugee treatment is rooted in racism. "We might as well be honest about the fact that we are not treating them equally", she "belongs" on the Supreme Court. His character and proclaimed that in his view, Jackson, he expressed his praise for her "rigorous, exhaustive review" of Judge Jackson's confirmation. "President Garland, when looking at the timelines, such a polarized time may warrant concern.

While many people are optimistic for Jackson’s confirmation, the recent history of SCOTUS nominations discounts positive expectations. In late September 2020, near the end of former POTUS Donald Trump’s term, controversy swirled when Trump nominated Amy Coney Barrett to succeed the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Trump’s nomination was confirmed by a simple majority in the Senate. In March 2016, former President Barack Obama’s nomination of Merrick Garland to succeed Antonin Scalia was blocked by then-Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. The comparison of Trump’s successful appointment of Barrett and the obstruction of Obama’s appointment of Garland, when looking at the timelines, struck many as unjust and points to the GOP’s likelihood of undermining Judge Jackson’s confirmation.

On March 2nd, 2022, when Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer [D-NY] spoke with ABC News following his closed-door conversation with Judge Jackson, he expressed his praise for her character and proclaimed that in his view, she "belongs" on the Supreme Court. His hope for her upcoming confirmation trial is that "Republicans will support her."

Conversely, McConnell said on the matter, "I also understand Judge Jackson was the favored choice of far-right dark money groups that have spent years attacking the legitimacy and structure of the court itself. The Minority Leader also made intentions of carrying out a "rigorous, exhaustive review" of Judge Jackson’s nomination.
March 25th, 2022

Responding to student requests for sex advice
By Anna Sweetland

can it be beneficial to reflect on our sexual preferences and desires, you will know more about their origins. Analysis is a good thing, but over-analyzing can do more harm than good. Pay attention to what you’re feeling mentally and physically in the moment; if you’re truly feeling that urge and undeniable desire to have sex, then you probably truly want to have sex. Trust that you know what you want, and try not to invalidate those genuine feelings as being socially-influenced.

Finally, another anonymous junior wrote, “Hey! There’s a girl in my class and I’m pretty sure he’s at least somewhat into me. We are in the same lab and I keep going out of his way to ask questions but we’ve never talked about anything besides class before! How do I break into personal conversation or ask him out without coming on too strong in case he’s not interested?”

Right off the bat, I need to confess that I don’t live the most sustainable lifestyle. I only learned a few months ago that plastic tampon applicators are bad for the environment. This discovery, along with many others, had me thinking twice about everything I own and reconsidering some of my most long-standing routines. How much waste am I producing? Further, how much waste is my sex life producing?

Between condoms, latex gloves, lubes, sex toys, lingerie and is it that connection or that romance that should feel horny. If you don’t feel sexual desire comes from societal expectations or Clay, Sustain and Slidq all sell more sustainable wa- ter-based and oil-based lubricants; however, some of these companies and many others still use plastic non-re- cycleable packaging. For instance, some people mentioned tendencies to feel inadequate. Queer sex is advertised in their unpreparedness for some impromptu guidance.

For instance, some people mentioned being in a relationship. It’s easy to fall into a routine and begin to pri- oritize other aspects of your life over sex, but remember if sex is a vital part of inti- macy for you and influences your well- being, then you need to discuss it with your partner that sex is important to you does not make you a sex addict. If you believe that you are not ready to have sex but you’re still interested in having some fun with someone, you can still have that experience without sex. ally will later in life, so it’s important to find the right brand of lubricant for you. If you don’t use it now, you probably will later in life, so it’s important to find the right brand of lubricant for you and also the planet. To provide a quick overview, most lubes are oil-based or water-based. Water-based lube typically includes natural ingredients like aloe or flax seed extract. Oil-based lubes, while easier to spread and slower to dry, can often irritate the skin. Water-based lubes are likely the best option for sex toy users. Plus, they’re more often free of synthetic ingredients such as glycerin and parabens as well as spermicidal chemicals that are not biodegradable.

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Turning Warner Gym into a Diversity Center: seven years of student activism

By Nola Thury

For years, students have used a myriad of approaches in seeking a new diversity center, including formal demands and a proposal—but this semester, students launched a new project to create a space for marginalized students. In January, an ASUPS committee called the Student Support Space Advisory Board created the University’s diversity committee. Currently, the committee is looking into renovating Warner Gym for this purpose.

In 2013 the Advocates for Institutional Change (AIC) demanded that the University “build a Cultural Center in the space that will be available where Warner Gym currently resides.” This demand states that the existing space for club meetings, the Student Diversity Center (SDC) is “insufficient and limited” and “unable to meet the needs of marginalized students on campus.” The University never met this demand, instead they refurbished the SDC. The issues of time and space in the SDC continue to affect student clubs today. In February of 2020, Bailey Gamel (‘21) introduced a proposal to the Board of Trustees to renovate Warner Gym. Gamel found that at the time students rarely interacted with the building, aside from the football team or visiting teams occasionally using it. Gamel saw the space’s potential to accommodate support offices, including CHWS, SAA, and the SDC.

To Gamel, having a permanent space dedicated to identity and advancement says “the University is making a physical investment in student wellbeing and student belonging and success.” Evidently, the University doesn’t see it that way. The Multi Identity Based Union (MIBU) released eleven demands to the University over one year ago on March 2, 2021: three have been denied, four have not been met, and four are in progress,” according to MIBU’s Instagram.

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The third demand points to the failure of the University to meet the first AIC Demand and reiterates the need for a larger, more permanent space to support marginalized students. The demand calls for the new Welcome Center to be turned into the “Justice and Equity Center.”

Campus tours run out of the Welcome Center almost daily, and the Admissions office seemingly has no intention of moving out. Maija Peterson, one of the MIBU demand authors, said, “When we wrote the demands, we knew that the Welcome Center would not be turned into a diversity center.” According to Peterson, the intention of the third demand was rather to highlight that a new building for recruitment was finished while the University has continually failed to create a space for students with marginalized identities that are already here. Peterson says that the SDC and accompanying SJC “were supposed to be a temporary solution to something that was going to be a growing need.” She says “as students of color, we’ve just historically been shuffled around from one space on campus to another, each with its own different inadequacies. So the University has always been behind in serving its students of color and students with marginalized identities.”

After two sets of demands and Gamel’s proposal, Bella Sanchez, a first-year senator, initiated an ASUPS committee to formalize the process of creating a new diversity center. The Student Support Space Advisory Body envisions an open, dynamic space dedicated to supporting students of marginalized identities. The committee hopes it includes the amenities mentioned in the AIC and MIBU demands, including a kitchen, enough space to accommodate large and simultaneous club meetings, and the ability to adapt to changes in the student body. Using the previous movements as references, the committee is reigniting the committee’s proposal to convert Warner Gym.

The building has a central spot on campus and the potential to be converted into a “dynamic and adaptable” space to accommodate club needs, according to Peterson who also sits on the committee. Another important aspect of the building is a kitchen. Liv Midjan (‘22), who chairs the committee, says it is making a physical investment in student wellbeing and a bike shop exclusively.

The University of Puget Sound’s bike shop, located on Alder street, is a great campus resource for students and visitors. The shop is not only a place for quick bike fixes, but can be a place for people to learn how to fix their bikes on their own. “If you come in, we’ll teach you how to do some kind of work, and this is at least the small bit that I feel like I can do.”

Gears and wheels: the University bike shop

By Sabrina Hubbell

One of Tinkham’s favorite stories from the shop is working on a unique bike built by a former shop employee. Spring 2019 some people came by and were like hey this bike has been in their basement for many years and we’re moving out, can we leave it here?” Tinkham said. The bike was built from two tail bikes welded together. Now it lives in storage and is sadly unrideable.

Despite how the bike shop was affected by covid, Andolsek and Tinkham hope to revitalize the shop and show students that it is a great resource, even just to stop by and say hi!

The Trail

The Trail is an independent, student-run organization funded by ASUPS. The Trail seeks to produce a credible weekly newspaper that serves as a comprehensive source of information relevant to its readership. The Trail acts as an archival record for the university, serves as a link between University of Puget Sound and the greater Tacoma community and provides an open forum for student opinion and discourse. Visit trail.pugetsound.edu for the full mission statement

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The Tacoma Defiance set to showcase skills in inaugural season of MLS NEXT Pro

The Tacoma Defiance are set to begin their 2022 season on March 26 against the Real Monarchs out of Salt Lake City. This first game at Starfire stadium marks a significant change for the Defiance, who will no longer play in the United Soccer League (USL) Championship. This year, the team will compete in the inaugural season of NEXT Pro, a new step in Major League Soccer’s (MLS) player pathway.

The Tacoma Defiance is the reserve team for the Seattle Sounders, an MLS first team. First teams compete at the highest level in the MLS, while reserve teams play in the USL Championship or other minor leagues with the intent of signing players on to their competing first team. The Tacoma Defiance will join nineteen other MLS reserve teams (and one independent team) in making the switch to NEXT Pro. Each team will play twenty-four games, evenly split at home and away, and eight of them will make the playoffs for the league cup.

The Defiance’s Head Coach Wade Webber is hopeful for what NEXT Pro can do for the players. “What we’re confident of is the MLS organization can put its weight behind the league in terms of profile exposure,” Webber said. NEXT Pro connects the MLS Next, the youth academies, to the MLS first teams. NEXT Pro is designed to increase player’s exposure, making it easier for them to sign on to a first team roster.

As for the players, they’re excited to get the season going. “There’s going to be really, really good teams that we’re facing,” Marlon Vargas, a Tacoma Defiance midfielder said. Vargas feels that they’re ready for the new league. “We’re really competitive and just eager to start,” Vargas said.

According to Webber, there is some uncertainty about NEXT Pro. “The obvious concern for everybody is just it’s a new league and it’s unknown,” Webber said. In addition, ten of the Defiance’s home games will be at Starfire stadium near Seattle instead of Cheney stadium here in Tacoma. According to Vargas, their time at Cheney will be missed. “You know, Cheney, that was the stadium,” Vargas said.

As for the fans in Tacoma, they’re excited for the boost to American soccer that NEXT Pro creates, but they will miss having games in their backyard. The Fern Hill Ultras are a fan group that supports both the Tacoma Defiance and the Seattle Sounders. In addition to being huge fans of the Defiance and the Sounders, the Ultras are an anti-fascist fan group. These two qualities make the group a tightly knit community. According to Ben, the group will continue their avid support of the Defiance no matter where the team is playing.

The Fern Hill Ultras feel that driving up to Starfire stadium is the price to pay for greater opportunities for the Defiance and its players. “There’s a lot of homegrown talent even in Tacoma coming through this system,” Ben said. He hopes NEXT Pro will be the platform some players need to move up in the league.

According to Webber, the Defiance typically tries to have one or two players brought up to the first team every season. The advantage of NEXT Pro is the exposure players will get to other MLS teams. “They may see talent that our first team looks at and goes, well, we don’t really have a spot for another,” Webber said. Webber believes that this increase in exposure will bring more Defiance players up to MLS first teams. These transfers will bring in more money for the Defiance, which will feed back to Tacoma’s youth program that trains players for both the Defiance and the Sounders. “We want to be a sustainable operation,” Webber said.

Fans and players are excited for the development of players in NEXT Pro. For the fans, they’re glad the players will get the exposure they deserve. “We are excited that it does kind of bolster their odds,” Ben said. For the team though, the focus is on this first season, and their eyes are on the playoffs. “We’re just ready to get started,” Vargas said.

March Madness is at its half-way mark and this year’s tournament is packed with the excitement and anticipation its nickname suggests. This division 1 basketball tournament, hosting 68 teams over seven rounds of single elimination competition, serves to crown the king of college basketball. With it comes the age-old tradition of constructing a bracket; essentially picking the team from each matchup you think will move on until you’re left with a winner, which has been in practice since the tournament’s inception in 1939.

Constructing your March Madness bracket, calling the upsets and picking a champion, can be a fun activity even for non-basketball enthusiasts. The success or failure of your bracket puts special onus on each and every game, making for a truly engaging event. As we await the Elite 8 batch of games, put down your homework for a moment and team the art of bracket building.

It’s always easiest to go with the teams favored to win. The tournament is structured with four regional conferences of teams: the east, south, west, and midwest, each with their own forum of ranked qualified teams (after teams have been seeded, ranking one through sixteen in each region, the top seed faces off against the lowest, the 16th seed faces the 2nd seed, and so on). The number one seeds from each region are Kansas(E), Baylor(S), Gonzaga(W), and Arizona(M/W).

Following two years of makeshift qualifying behind closed doors, and suspicious matchups that ESPN refers to as the most unusual NCAA tournaments in the competition’s history, the 2021-2022 schedule sees a return to the format that’s elicited excitement for decades. In other words the pandemic made the last couple of tournaments pretty weird this year. This year’s Sweet 16 is expected to be the first true showcase of elite college basketball in recent years. Per usual, the professional recommendation is to stick with the quote en quote ‘big guns’, letting the seeded ranking system do the work for you.

Will Mathews, a second year men’s basketball player at Puget Sound, shares some similar personal insights for your bracket needs; “Even though I’m rooting for USC, I think Baylor has a good chance to win again this year because all their bigs returned and their new point guard Akinjo pairs up nice with Flanagan. They are both lockdown defenders and attack the basket aggressively to make plays”. Surprising friends, and according to Lauttila, the twelve versus five seed matchup is always a point of contention at the start of the tournament. Seeing as a 12 seed upset will most likely face the top seed of their region in the next round, you can make an argument that picking upsets is the key to the success of your bracket.

According to Insider, “in 13 of the past 28 years, at least two No. 12 teams had an upset in the first round”. Predicting the tournament’s biggest upsets, means carefully selecting which twelve through fifteen seeds are going to be your Cinderella story. Alas, in this year’s sweet sixteen, the 12-15 upset strategy would have sunk your bracket almost before it began, as there’s just one of those teams remaining in the tournament: the St. Peter’s Peacocks.

Bracket bonuses can be as Bryan andcareful as you make them, in the end only you can decide how you’ll select winners. If you’re looking to spice things up, or have some fun with an alternative bracket you can try out the mascot battle royale, picking the mascot essence of any basketball team in combat all the way through. Or maybe king of the losers, where you only pick the quote en quote ‘worst’ team until you’ve adviced sixteen, the 12-15 upset strategy would have fared your bracket almost before it began, as there’s just one of those teams remaining in the tournament: the St. Pet- er’s Peacocks.

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It’s equally amusing to as- sess how well those types of brackets may have fared in retrospect. For example this year’s traditional bracket would have been wildly unsuccessful as the likes of the St. Peter’s Peacocks took down the Kentucky Wildcats, and the Frogs from TCU slayed the Seton Hall Pi- rates. Some good fun, nonetheless, March Madness captures the true essence of sports offering rich entertainment for all.

By Reed Loer

By Luke Ahearn

March 25th, 2022
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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

A few weeks ago, at the start of Russia’s second military action in Ukraine, I spoke to a faculty member in an international relations about the ways in which nations find themselves repeating the same mistakes as time dials the importance of past lessons. Russia’s war in Ukraine illustrates this history in more ways than one. While to some the urgency of action may seem exaggerated or naive, Russia’s military and government have now reclaimed the former disaster site of Chernobyl and several subsequent nuclear waste facilities. Reports showing that mishandling could cast a blanket of radioactive waste over Europe.

For those who know the history of Putin, this is entirely unsurprising in his leadership and direction in aiming to reclaim Russia’s former empire. For those who don’t, Putin spent his formative years and experiences in the KGB, the U.S.S.R.’s combined counterpart of the CIA and FBI. An agency known for their use of torture, assassination, and other inhumane tactics both abroad and internally, as a secret police. In this, while some may point out the hypocrisy of our own government for similar tactics and violations of peace, it is the duty of the world to act now and confront this, where the international community previously stood still to unjustifiable slaughter.

Here, the role of an intervention should be simple with a clear end point and no role in the governance of Ukraine. Either a U.N. or U.S. led coalition should push back the Russian Military from Ukraine, or at very least the Ukrainian skies and nuclear-clear facilities, and then leave the nest to Ukraine’s elected government. Failure to do so presents the dangerous possibility of imperial expansion and endless war — wars in Russia, along with other nations, in an age of widespread nuclear weapons, may be less hesitant to unleash such destruction.

Dear Editor,

It is time to show why it’s absurd when Pacifists choose to avoid the bulletin and suggest Ukrainians ought to give up. Russia’s invasion into Ukraine divides Americans into those who support Ukraine, those who support Russia, and those who support neither. The last group takes a non-anti-war position, referred to as Pacifism, which suggests that we should resolve all disputes through peaceful means instead of violence.

Though understanding this stance has disturbing normative implications. A recent Pacifist argument for Ukraine I heard goes something like this when formulated into premises: If we agree that we ought to reduce the possibility of death and despair, and if all wars cause death and despair, and if Ukrainians, by defending their country, are engaging in war, then Ukrainians ought not interfere with Russia’s invasion in order to prevent death and despair.

I’ll accept the first two portions of that argument, as I think most good-faith interlocutors would consider the rest of the argument to be self-defeating. We can understand the ethics underlying this argument as suggesting that the urgency of end and despair of war outweigh the possible good of preventing subjugation, or as suggesting we ought not fight because we could not universalize this decision.

But we can make similar ethical arguments in favor of defending Ukraine, and stronger ones at that!

Let’s assume that Russia subjugated Ukraine, as they’ve now demonstrated an interest in doing. This would likely see the return of a figure like Viktor Yanukovych, the President of Ukraine from 2010 to 2014, who was forced out of office and now resides in the European Union protest of 2014, eventually convicted by Ukrainian courts in 2019 of high treason. Even if not Yanukovych, it is unlikely that Putin installs anyone else one of his right-hand people — there is no room for government officials with European sympathies.

In turn, there would be the persecution of former Ukrainian state officials (assassins have already targeted President Tymoshenko) not to mention the thousands of fighters who killed Russian soldiers or dissented. There would also be the despair of once again coming under Russian authority. To recall, 90 percent of Ukraine voted for independence in a 1991 Referendum. Presuming that Ukraine acquiesced to Russia or even non-violently protested instead of fighting, as the Pacifist would have it, Ukraine would simply have to hope for Putin’s benevolence and recognition of this vote.

The potential death and despair of war is clearly no less tragic than the potential for death and despair of subjugation. But it also doesn’t seem reasonable that we could universalize a Pacifistic response in Ukraine. If a country invaded the U.S., would American Pacifists still bite the bullet and say we should “give up”? Saying that the Ukraine situation is different would be a special pleading logical fallacy, but saying we ought to take up arms would just make Pacifists hypocrites.

The more contentious Pacifist position is that we shouldn’t send military aid to Ukraine. Having established that subjugation is unreasonable, sending military aid maximizes the chance of positive outcomes for Ukraine and also universalizes in terms of upholding national sovereignty and self-determination. In other words, military aid is both the most practical and ethical thing we can do for our circumstance.

Pacifism is best confined to the armchair instead of the frontlines. Sincerely,

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March 25th, 2022

Letters to the Editor

By Chloe Shankland

The archives section of The Trail looks at recurring issues of importance on campus through the lens of past publications. One issue of recurring contention is the place the Greek system holds in our small liberal arts community. Movements like Abolish Greek Life (AGL) have recently refueled the fire of such conversations. The Greek system has an account on the platform, allowing anonymous submissions of incidents involving Greek life witnessed or experienced by campus members from problematic to heinous. The account’s most recent post is from April 28, 2021. Posts include mention of incidents ranging from the protection of perpetrators through rape culture to the exclusionary hierarchy upheld through harmful gender stereotypes and the offenses go on.

Diving into the archives, one can see the series of letters ‘Letters to the Editor’ from 1997 in which three students passionately argue about the place and problems of Greek life on cam-

Appalling, yet normalized, parallel to our country’s history of enslavement.

Another submission by Ryan Lucia discusses these experiences and the destruction of a like Abolish Greek Life movement, divide between ‘independents’ and ‘Greeks’ that was and, to some extent, remains filled with animosity.

Hersh details further Greek life experiences on our campus and the firm response to anti-greek sentiment from the Greek community.

Through this exchange, we can reflect on the history of American life of today and further contextualize the recent stories shared via the AGL in-stagram. Acknowledgement of such history can serve as a tool of evolution — however, as a special-pleading logical fallacy, I know these conversations often come and go without tangible change. Whenever issues like those discussed by the Abolish Greek Life movement arise, the response often falls short with a few emphatic acknowledgement: ‘of course we don’t, that’s horrible, but…’

The exchanges from 1997 were not necessarily any different, but sickeningly similar. Evident stagnation garners the question: Are we still beholden to the same cycle of actionless discourse? Regardless, Hersh’s words still ring true: ‘Individuals choose the Greek system with all its latent flaws and responsibilities. It is at times Greek system needs to recognize flaws.”

Letters to the Editor
Indecent: the intersection of Queerness and Judaism on stage

By Kate Patterson

Looking forward and looking back: [A] Hip Hop music history

By Kate Patterson